

JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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o. 101

April 1, 1957

In These Pages

British Churchmen Reply to N.C.C.....	1
ape Library for Blind.....	2
Church World Service 1957 Program.....	2
ew Program Coordinator for Servicemen's Centers.....	2
ohnson Airbase Center Dedicated.....	2
ishop Yashiro Declines Prime Minister's Invitation.....	3
resident Masatoshi Matsushita Accepts.....	3
religious Freedom Preserved in Fukuoka.....	3
ew Addition to Bott Memorial.....	4
ore Science Needed in Christian Schools.....	4
r. Seishi Ogawa to Visit Europe.....	4
ew Texts on Bible.....	4
n Brief.....	4

BRITISH CHURCHMEN REPLY TO N.C.C.

Letters acknowledging receipt of the N.C.C. resolution regarding abolition of A-H bombs have been received from Dr. Geoffrey Fisher, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Dr. George K. Bell, Bishop of Chichester. The latter, in a letter to Dr. Michio Kozaki, chairman of the N.C.C., said that he would forward copies of the resolution to the British Council of Churches and to Geneva in the hope that it would be distributed through the Ecumenical Press Service, and concluded by expressing his agreement with the resolution. Dr. Masatoshi Matsushita was informed of the contents of these letters before his departure from Japan on March 30.

p. 101 - April 1, 1957 -2-

TAPE LIBRARY FOR BLIND

The Committee for the Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped of Japan Church World Service has inaugurated plans for a Tape Library which will provide recordings of books considered especially important for blind persons. The idea originated when the Reverend Kentaro Buma, Associate Director of Japan Church World Service, was reading English books for blind students at a local university. Tapes have been solicited from broadcasting stations around the nation and the cooperation of leading Christian women has been secured in purchasing tape recorders and in making recordings.

JAPAN CHURCH WORLD SERVICE 1957 PROGRAM

Japan Church World Service has set up a schedule for the distribution of relief goods in 1957 which calls for a total of 1,200,000 lbs. of powdered milk, 11,200,000 lbs. of flour, 3,200,000 lbs. of beans, and 10,000 lbs. of cheese. (The fact that cheese is even in the list is indicative of a change in the dietary habits of the Japanese people.)

NEW PROGRAM COORDINATOR FOR SERVICEMEN'S CENTERS

The Reverend and Mrs. Donald F. Sears arrived in Japan March 11th as replacements for the Reverend and Mrs. Norman Koehler who are returning to the United States. Mr. Sears will assume the position of Program Coordinator for Servicemen under the auspices of the Military Base Problems Committee of the National Christian Council. This program was first initiated in 1954 in an attempt to unite the foreign military base personnel with local Christian churches in an off-base program of fun, fellowship and worship. In the past three years the work was expanded to include projects in Sasebo, Kure, Sendai, Tachikawa, Fuchu, and Johnson bases, but the first two have now been closed because of the withdrawal of troops from the areas. Future plans call for the opening of a center in Yokohama.

JOHNSON AIRBASE CENTER DEDICATED

A new servicemen's center at Johnson Airbase was dedicated March 24th with the commanding officer of the base and high military and Japanese officials present. The Center is located in front of Gate No. 1 at a cost of ¥ 7.5 million or approximately twenty thousand dollars. The building, which has 1,800 sq. ft. of floor space, has facilities for meeting rooms, reading rooms, games, a kitchen, etc.

BISHOP YASHIRO DECLINES PRIME MINISTER'S INVITATION

Although there was some difference of opinion in Christian circles regarding the propriety of Prime Minister Kishi's invitation to Bishop Masuke Yashiro to go to England as the Prime Minister's personal representative to protest the proposed H-bomb tests at Christmas Island in the Pacific Ocean, there has been complete satisfaction with the choice of President Masatoshi Matsushita of Saint Paul's University for this important mission. Many Christian leaders saw in the choice of a prominent Christian churchman an attempt by the government to use religion for political ends. While pleased with the implied recognition of the place of Christianity in Japanese life, they were reluctant to have the church become involved with the government.

PRESIDENT MASATOSHI MATSUSHITA ACCEPTS

Dr. Masatoshi Matsushita is a prominent international lawyer and member of the Anglican-Episcopal communion in Japan. He became well-known in postwar years for his defense of General Hideki Tojo at the war crimes trials. At a farewell reception for him at the Christian Center Dr. Matsushita explained that the purpose of his visit was limited to a protest against the Christmas Island tests and did not concern the entire subject of abolition of A-H Bombs. He said, however, that he would like to make the British people aware of the fact that Japanese opposition to nuclear weapons is not due to communist agitation but is very widespread among all the people, especially Christians. As reported in the Christian Press (Kirisuto Tsushin, March 24), he said, "I am not going to stage a "sit-down" strike in England, denounce the government as inhumane, or cry for sympathy setting forth Japan's position. The British people are realistic and are well-known for their common sense. I would like to talk with as many people as possible in many different walks of life about this matter and I urge your prayers on behalf of this mission." Among those present at the meeting were national political figures such as Motojiro Sugiyama, Komakichi Tsuoka, Tamotsu Hasegawa and Junzo Sasamori.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM PRESERVED IN FUKUOKA

Religious leaders in Japan are pleased that the efforts of the Fukuoka Prefectural government to investigate and supervise local religious organizations has been defeated. According to the Christian Press (Kirisuto Tsushin, March 27, 1957) the prefectural religious juridical persons council has been dissolved because of refusal of Christian pastors to participate and the opposition of the Religions League of Japan. (This failure is of great importance because the experiment in Fukuoka was being watched with much interest by other prefectural governments and had it succeeded there is little doubt but that every prefectural government in Japan would have attempted to establish similar councils. The religious world should be grateful to the Christian leaders in Fukuoka for their firm stand on this question.)

. 101 - April 1, 1957 -4-

NEW ADDITION TO BOTT MEMORIAL

A new addition to the Bott Memorial Center for orphans and the training social workers for delinquents will be dedicated on April 6. Princess Kamatsu, Governor Yasui of Tokyo, the Minister of Public Welfare, and other notables are expected to be present. Mrs. Edith Bott, widow of Dr. Bott, is coming from Canada for the occasion.

SCIENCE NEEDED IN CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

The Education Association of Christian Schools has decided to establish a section on scientific education. At present there are only five Christian institutions have separate science departments. These are St. Paul's University, International Christian University, Kanto Gakuin University, Doshisha University and Tokyo Women's Christian College. The association is of the opinion that more schools should have such departments in order to train more Christian science teachers and is requesting Miss Ma Hirose, President of Hiroshima Girls' School, to present this need to churches and mission boards when she visits the United States in the near future. Concrete plans will be discussed at the March meeting of the association's directors.

SEISHI OGAWA TO VISIT EUROPE

Mr. Seishi Ogawa, Secretary of the AVACO Center will leave Japan for Europe on April 10. He will attend the World Christian Radio Conference in Germany April 25 - May 5, which is sponsored by the World Council of Churches, the European Council on Christian Audio Visual Evangelism which meets in London June 15-22, and study television evangelism at Union Theological Seminary for two months at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. After attending a meeting of the World Audio Visual Council in Germany September 4-10 he will return to Japan on about September 15.

NEW TEXTS ON BIBLE

The Education Association of Christian Schools has decided to prepare special text books for use in all affiliated schools. The junior high school text will deal with the Old and New Testaments. For senior high schools, a course will treat with life experiences and one with the Bible. A separate text will probably be prepared for students who enter from non-Christian junior high schools.

BRIEF

The Reverend and Mrs. Norman E. Koehler, who have been responsible for establishing servicemen's centers in Japan, Okinawa and Korea, are returning to the United States in April. Enroute they will visit military areas and mission stations in the Far East and Europe with a view to expanding the program which has been so successfully established in Japan.

b. 101 - April 1, 1957 -5-

The Reverend Yoshimasa Hinohara, eighty year old minister of the Maoka Karigaoka Church, is visiting the United States for six months this year with Mrs. Hinohara.

Dr. Toyohiko Kagawa is speaking in the mining areas of northern Kyushu April 9-16 as a part of the NCC Protestant Centennial Program.

The Reverend Jiro Fukui, minister of the Kikai Church of Amami Oshima Island is returning to Japan in May for a series of lectures regarding his work.

The Round Table Conference on Christian Peace and Culture (Kirisutokyo Anka Heiwa Kondan Kai) was held at the Ginza Christian Center on March 18. Among those present were Messrs. Setsuzo Sawada, Komakichi Matsuoka, Shimmune Abe, Yoriichi Manabe, Kyosuke Kato, Hanako Muraoka, and Glen Turner.

The Reverend Kunio Kodaira, minister of the Yoyogi Chubu Church (United Church), is visiting the United States this spring and summer for approximately three months. He will be granted a D.D. degree by the Pacific School of Religion.

Mrs. Paul S. Mayer was awarded the Fifth Order of Merit for her services to education and social welfare work during the forty-eight years she served in Japan.

Dr. Tadao Yanaihara and other leaders of the Non-church Movement participated in a commemorative service honoring their founder, Kanzo Uchimura, Joshi Gakuin auditorium on March 31st.

An Asian Christian Youth Rally is scheduled to be held on August 11, 1958 in connection with the World Convention on Christian Education. Christian students resident in Japan are helping to plan the program.

The National Council of the WCTU will meet at the Tosa Church, Kochi City, May 28-30. About 150 are expected to be present.

The annual meeting of the Japan Baptist Convention will be held at Magisan-so on the Izu peninsula July 16-19.

